

ABSTRACT: Preliminary study of serial verb constructions in Wanyi

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Languages differ in whether they allow multiple lexical verbs within the same tensed clause or not; Wanyi does while English and Warlpiri do not. Furthermore, languages differ in whether they can or can't embed or adjoin a non-finite clause containing a lexical verb within a tensed clause. Wanyi, like English and Warlpiri, also allows this possibility. This paper presents a preliminary exploration of one type of serial verb construction in Wanyi which involves verbs of motion in what I will refer to as the manner-direction construction as exemplified in (1). In this construction a verb of 'manner' of motion (*baba* 'fly', *burrbijbi* 'move rapidly', *jilaba* 'move, walk') combines with a verb of directed motion (*kajalaba* 'move upwards'; *barulajba* 'pass', *jayi* 'move away' *kannga* 'move back to'; *walimi* 'exit', *kanungku* 'approach').

- (1) a. Babaa=nurri kajalaba kingkarri. Barla-wurru.
fly=1EX.PL.NOM climb up sky-ALLAT
'We fly upwards up towards the sky.'
- b. Ja=ninyji baba barulajba
FUT=2SG.NOM fly pass
'You will fly by us.'
- c. Babaa=nyulu jayi.
fly=2SG.NOM away
'It (bird) flies away.'
- d. Barulajba=nyulu burrbijbi
pass_by=3sg.nom move_fast
'He raced past.'
- e. Burrbijbi nyulu barulajba. (=d)

As the comparison of (1d) and (1e) shows, either verb can appear in the clause initial position, indicating that the syntactic relation between them is similar to that of verb+adverb in English as shown in examples such as *He flew past/away/over* and *Past/away/over he flew*. However they differ from English where the verb cannot be preposed leaving the adverb stranded *Fly away he did* but **Fly he did away*. In my talk I discuss the data in (1) and other examples probing the syntactic relations between these verbs and comparing these constructions with those illustrated in (2) which involve a 'subordinate' verb in a postpositional phrase.

- (2) a. Banyajba=nyulu ngambalanya jilaj-ini.
pass=3SG.NOM 12PL.ACC move-LOC
'He went past us.' (lit. He past us, moving.)
- b. Baba-na=nyulu jilaba.
fly-LOC=3SG.NOM move
'He flew.' (lit. He moved flying.)